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IMPACT OF OIL EXPLORATION WORK ON AN INUIT COMMUNITY

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August, 1974

Prepared for the
CANADIAN SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY
ASSOCIATION MEETINGS

Toronto, Ontario

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Introduction

During the winter of 1972-1973, Gulf Oil of Canada began an interesting and innovative Inuit work program. Rather than recruit workers for oil exploration from the South or from willing white northern residents, the oil company approached an entire Inuit community. Gulf representative contacted the people of Coppermine, located on the Arctic coast on Coronation Gulf, and offered employment in their drilling program in the Mackenzie Delta to men of the community.

This proposal was approved by the settlement council and by settlement residents generally. As a result fifty-five men were partly or completely involved in the work project between November 1, 1972, and May 1, 1973. Thus, approximately one-half of Coppermine male work force worked for Gulf during this period.

The men were transported from Coppermine by plane directly to the work sites, either the base camp at Swimming Point or one of Gulf's three drilling sites. They generally worked for 14 days, twelve hours a day, after which they were flown back to Coppermine for a one-week "long break," while their places were taken by another crew.

During the summer of 1973, two University of Alberta sociologists were engaged by Gulf to review this employment program. The company desired an independent assessment with recommendations prior to the beginning of the 1973-1974 drilling season. This paper presents an assessment of the impact of the work program on the community.¹

The Research Methodology

The researchers were given complete freedom to directly contact anyone connected with the work program. All questions and questioning were left to the researchers who made three visits to Coppermine plus several visits to Yellowknife, Inuvik, the base camp and an operating drilling site. Some respondents were also interviewed in Calgary and in Edmonton. The data were gathered in the following ways: (1) A structured interview schedule was administered by three Coppermine Inuit interviewers in Eskimo to the men employed by Gulf, their wives, and a sample of their older children. (2) Unstructured interviews were conducted by the researchers with most Gulf personnel who were directly involved with the work project and with white supervisory personnel representing the drilling, construction and transportation sub-contractors. (3) Unstructured interviews were conducted by the researchers with a number of Inuit and white people who held positions of authority and influence in Coppermine. Altogether, 172 interviews were completed, 134 with Inuit and 38 with whites. (4) Unpublished data were compiled by the researchers from the files of governmental agencies serving in Coppermine; e.g., R.C.M.P., Nursing Station, Liquor Control Board; and the Territorial Department of Health and Social Development, as well as from Gulf employment records.

One could categorize our research approach as a focused, saturation interview. All participants were contacted and asked about the same phenomena -- from their perspective, what happened at work in the Delta and what happened in Coppermine? Essentially, the researchers were identified as doing a study of the reactions of whites and Inuits to the

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previous winter's employment by Gulf. Prior to our interviews in Coppermine, we sought the approval of the settlement council. We felt that people cooperated freely and answered our inquiries openly. To our knowledge, we were not refused access to any individual involved nor were we kept from pursuing any particular questions. Interest in the program was very high; many people spoke freely about their negative and positive feelings.

We recognize that our questionnaire was limited and highly focused. This is an exploratory, suggestive piece of research in a bi-cultural situation where misunderstanding is very easy. We must acknowledge that we had more extensive discussions with whites than with Inuits. The questionnaires provide most of our Inuit data.

The Impact

One can readily imagine that when half of the men from a small, isolated community have one common work experience, the whole community is affected. People talk about it, share stories and generally make it a part of every day life. Many life functions become organized in relation to it. Further, when the work experience brings in sizable amounts of money, its effect is felt in every part of the community. In Coppermine, more money meant more goods for everyone -- for men, women and children.

The researchers attempted to collect data which would permit constructing an accurate picture of Coppermine before and after the Gulf work program. Thus we could make judgments about what differences had arisen. Certainly it is difficult to easily relate an increase in employment to an increase in X, because of the many intervening social, economic and political changes

going on in Coppermine and in the N.W.T. Further, one cannot easily assess changes at the social-psychological level because of their research intricacy in a bi-cultural setting. In the following pages we will describe the indices we used and the impacts we identified in a number of areas, and present an interpretation .

Impact -- The Contact Process

The very process by which Gulf approached this program had a positive effect on the community. When our interviewers asked the men, wives and children of Coppermine whether or not they wished the work for Gulf to continue in the coming season, a large majority said, "yes". Part of that positive feeling toward Gulf work is due to the way in which Gulf approached the community, which gave people confidence in the good faith and sensitivity of the company. We will briefly outline this process.

1. A Gulf management team was formed to explore the feasibility of this program for this community.
2. Other corporations who had native people working for them were consulted, as well as the Territorial Department of Education.
3. A meeting was held in Coppermine with the settlement council and extensive discussions were held about the program. The council was told that it could veto the project if it wished.
4. Following council approval, a public meeting for all interested residents was held in Coppermine. Here, company officials explained oil work and the program, showing films and slides. At this meeting, interested men were invited to apply for an interview.

5. All applicants were interviewed and application forms filled out. This was done by a Gulf employee and a representative of the Special and Continuing Adult Education Department of the Territorial government.
6. Details of the program were worked out in consultation with the Settlement Council. The council gave its opinion on the rotation schedule, its timing and nominated two men for the post of liaison person, to be hired by Gulf.
7. Members of the council were given a tour of the base camp and the work sites in the Mackenzie Delta. This way, the Inuit could see where the community men would work, ask questions, and help answer questions at home.
8. Another call for workers was made by a Gulf representative in Coppermine. This gave another opportunity to men who were absent before or who had changed their minds.
9. A community-wide pre-employment course for prospective workers was given by the Adult Education Branch in Coppermine. The general nature of oil work and wage employment were discussed. Some two hundred people attended the one-day seminar.
10. An orientation course for Gulf Oil and its contractors' supervisors was held at the base camp. Two Inuit men attended and participated in discussions. Essentially, the company explained its program and emphasized its commitment to Inuit employment. The goal of the course was to motivate those present to support it and to prepare them for potential communication and cultural problems.

11. The actual selection of workers took place. The selection committee consisted of representatives from Gulf, the Council, Adult Education and the Inuit liaison man.

This approach indicates an acceptance of the idea of community participation and consultation. It supported the notion of the increasing importance of local self-government and it respected the people's rights to information, choice and assistance. Thus, Gulf set up a pattern of expectations as to how a community and an oil company could work together.

The Economic Impact

1. Wages. During the six-month employment period, the men earned about \$162,500 or an average of \$3,000 for the fifty-four men involved. The range was from a few hundred dollars to a maximum of about \$7,300. There were nine Inuit men who made \$5,000 or more.

Careful checking with informed parties suggested that all this money went to Coppermine. No checks were sent or deposited outside the settlement. One man sent some cash to his wife in the hospital.

To assess the impact of this amount of money, we must relate it to the pre-existing economic base. Along with observations and self-reported materials, the researchers used the best available published information on wages, welfare payments, family allowance and old age pensions and handicrafts to estimate community income. For example, a survey taken in July, 1971, showed thirty-four Inuit employed full time and thirty-nine employed part time in the community. Using the Territorial wage guide and general knowledge as to the level of these positions, the researchers estimated wages.

or Welfare, we had the exact figures for the period and the comparable previous one. (See Table I)

TABLE I

Estimated Sources of Income in Coppermine
November 1, 1972 - May 1, 1973

Local employment wages full-time	\$119,000.
Local employment wages part-time	\$ 45,500.
Welfare Payments	\$ 12,915.
Family Allowance and Old Age Assistance	\$ 21,000.
Sales of sealskins, carvings, handicrafts	\$ 20,000.
Subtotal	\$218,415.
Wages from Gulf Oil and its contractors	\$162,584.
Total	\$380,999.

Gulf employment brought a considerable increase in cash in the community during the six months under consideration. It is estimated that cash flow in the community increased by about 75 per cent. It largely went to many men who were not already wage earners and who were unable to compete for community jobs.

2. Expenditures. What were the economic consequences of this increase in money? One can only give an educated guess. The main source of data would have been the Hudson Bay Company store, but the local store and the Company refused to divulge any information. Since, at that time, the Bay was the only general store for the community, we assume that a major portion of the money went to it and many of the Inuit interviewed said their money did go to

the Bay.

The Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce which supplies a "flying bank" service to Coppermine reported that no new accounts were opened. Cheques were generally deposited at The Bay and cash withdrawn or the goods purchased charged to it. The local priests (Catholic and Anglican) reported no increase in collection donations.

To discover how this money was expended, an estimate was made of the living costs for each of the Inuit employees and their families. Using Territorial Health and Welfare rates for food and clothing and the rental scale from the Northern Rental Housing Program, the costs of food and clothing to the families of Gulf workers during the employment period were estimated at \$81,500. Rental costs were estimated at \$22,000.

A direct source of expenditure information came from our questionnaires. Inuit workers were asked to report on items of equipment purchased with Gulf earnings. The cost of these items has been estimated based on average prices for these items in Coppermine. The results are found in Table II.

Table II

Estimated Value of Equipment Purchases by
Gulf Employed Workers in Coppermine
Nov. 1, 1972 - May 1, 1973

Item	Number	Estimated Average Cost	Total
Skidoos	26	\$1,050	\$27,120
Boats	11	\$ 800	\$ 8,800
Outboard Motors	8	\$ 850	\$ 6,800
Guns	26	\$ 100	\$ 2,600
Tents	13	\$ 60	\$ 780
TOTAL			\$45,100

Another regular expenditure was liquor. Liquor was basically ordered from Yellowknife, paid for before it was sent, and flown in by the regular commercial airlines. The Liquor Control Board in Yellowknife reported that \$13,556 worth of liquor was sent to Coppermine during the Gulf work period. The comparable figure for the previous year was \$9025. This was an increase of 50 per cent. Since about one-eighth of the community is white, and many drink, it is hard to know the exact portion of the money which came from the Inuit, but we ascribed seven-eighths of the purchases to the Inuit.

In Table III is found our estimate of the ways in which Gulf earnings were expended. It must be noted that store food prices generally were higher than the southern prices and that rent was adjusted to income. This crude expenditure estimate would indicate that all the money is spent in the community. It also suggests that almost 80 per cent of the money would be spent at The Bay if the food, clothing and capital equipment categories are combined.

Table III

Estimated Expenditures by Gulf Employees in Coppermine
Nov. 1, 1972 - June 1, 1973

		Percentage of Total
Food & Clothing	\$ 81,500	50.4
Rental	\$ 22,000	13.5
Capital Equipment	\$ 46,100	28.3
Liquor	\$ 12,000	7.4
Unaccounted for	\$ 986	0.7
	\$162,584	100

3. Changing Expenditure Patterns. Since The Bay would not release its data, we must rely on our own observations and reports from residents to discuss the changing buying patterns. The following changing store purchase patterns were often reported after Gulf work began. These should be considered impressionistic, but all were emphasized by several people.

- a. Children wore more new clothing.
- b. Children spent much more money on sweets -- candy, pop, chips, cookies.
- c. Parents bought more toys and play things for children.
- d. Smaller household goods such as radios, stereos, record players were purchased.
- e. A few made improvements in furnishing their homes such as carpets.
- f. Gambling increased; several won large amounts of money.
- g. Gifts to relatives, especially the elderly, increased.
- h. Food preferences changed to more fresh fruit, vegetables, canned goods in general, bread, biscuits.
- i. Liquor consumption increased

It is of interest that when the older children were asked, "What things made you happy about your father working for Gulf last year?", they almost always noted material goods purchased by the money: fifty seven per cent mentioned candy and soft drinks; 45 per cent mentioned new clothing; 31 per cent mentioned more food; 31 per cent mentioned more money, and 25 per cent mentioned more equipment such as skidoos, boats and guns.

In summary, we estimate that cash in the community increased by at least

75 per cent. Almost all the money was spent in the community, most of it apparently going to The Bay. Generally, it appears that more people had more money and bought many more goods.

4. Subsistence Hunting. In a community where hunting has been a traditional part of life, an assessment of the impact of outside work on hunting must be made. Most Inuit depend heavily on wild meat, especially the cariboo, in the winter. What effect did winter outside employment have for the families of men on Gulf rotation?

None of the men employed reported completely stopping their hunting. About 16 per cent reported that they went everytime they were home; 18 per cent said most of the time, and 65 per cent said once in awhile. When the wives were asked if they had less meat while their husbands were working for Gulf, 71 per cent said "no" and 39 per cent said "yes".

The researchers further checked this pattern by interviewing the former Settlement Manager who had been in Coppermine for two years prior to June, 1973. He emphasized that (1) wild meat was as abundant as the preceding winters; (2) the cariboo were plentiful and could be successfully hunted on a one day outing; (3) there were fewer dogs in the settlement which decreased the need for meat; (4) Gulf employment appreciably increased the number and quality of skidoos especially for those who were not previously able to buy them: largely the older men as well as the younger, less educated, ones; (5) with one week's leisure during the "long break" and good equipment, there was ample, easy opportunity to hunt cariboo; (6) older equipment was passed on to other relatives, thereby increasing the overall hunting capability, and meat was sometimes given in exchanged for use of equipment; and (7) meat was easier

to acquire for the entire community because of the sizeable investment of the Gulf wages into equipment. Other white and Inuit respondents presented a similar picture.

Overall, there appears to have been no reduction in the supply of meat. About 40 per cent of the wives did report less, but this could be explained as a normal pattern over the winter, the wage money might have been used to purchase store meat, or the unusual two week work shift may have curtailed some hunting. One can state with reasonable confidence that outside wage work did not eliminate hunting nor reduce the meat supply.

One also should mention that fish play an important part in the diet and, to a lesser extent, seals and birds. These appear to have been available in good supply and to have been harvested. The availability of a community freezer, as well as individual household freezers, allowed families to stockpile meat by freezing, as well as drying. The overall picture is thus one of a community with a more than adequate supply of wild meat.

Impact on Community Social Life

To obtain information on community social life, we asked long-term white residents about their perception of the effect of Gulf employment. They pointed out that the Inuit people had only been in a permanent settlement for twelve years. Thus, settled community life was very recent. The people gathered together on special holidays such as Christmas and New Year, but even this pattern was less than fifty years old. Previously, the people wandered in small family groups and only infrequently met together in larger groupings.

In the early settlement period, most men were active trappers with dog

teams. This meant that they were frequently absent for two to three weeks trips during the winter. Thus, the community always has had people away, especially the men beyond school age, and often family groups. One has to view the effect of Gulf work on community life in terms of the recency of settlement and the continued mobility of residents.

One area of group community activities that had increased is related to recreational events -- motion pictures, bingos, a pool hall and dances. These were usually well attended and charged an admission fee. Most white respondents felt that there was increased participation in all of the fee-charging activities during the Gulf work time. For example, the number of movies shown increased from two to four a week.

A second source of information was the Settlement Council members. During the peak employment period, in mid-winter, 1973-74, some respondents said that the council expressed concern about the effect on community life. Members wondered whether there would be enough men to adequately staff community services. In September, 1974 we attempted to interview all council members to discuss this concern and the question of what might happen if more men would be hired in the winter of 1973-74. By that time, the council members view was that Gulf employment was strictly a question between each man and Gulf and that the community could function with the available men. In fact, council members did not appear interested in discussing the matter; Gulf employment was no longer considered a serious community issue. Council members said that the men liked their Gulf work and it brought needed money into the community. They saw it as a positive influence in the life of the community.

One council man was particularly articulate in English and gave an overall view of his perceptions. He expressed concern about personal and family growth in addition to the long-range effects on the community of the Gulf work. He wanted the wives and children to have opportunities to broaden their experience so that they could understand the outside world. Thus, he suggested that the wives and children should see their fathers at work in the Delta, and be exposed to a variety of cultural and educational opportunities outside Coppermine and the N.W.T. He hoped that the men would invest part of their Gulf money in outside family travel and cultural growth. He felt that Gulf could facilitate this by structuring opportunities.

This man's perspective was unique; no other Inuit raised these issues. Fundamentally, he approved of the Gulf experience for the last winter, but hoped for more job advancement and training in the winter of 1973-74.

Overall, the council appeared quite content with the Gulf experience. They saw it as a positive influence in the life of the community, but as one over which the settlement council now had little control, and should have little control. *Not in accordance with Inuit values.*

Also, we asked the men and women interviewed whether or not they felt Gulf employment was good for the community. All the men and all the wives answered, "yes". Further probing on this answer failed to yield any statement as to undesirable effects.

These people were also asked about which pattern of employment they would favor: three weeks work, one week home; two weeks work and two weeks home; or the present pattern, two weeks work and one week home. There would be higher wages with the first option, less with the second, and about the same with the third. About 60 per cent of the men and 65 per cent of the wives

opted for the three and one option. Only one wife and no men opted for the two and two pattern. Had community life and participation been a serious issue, the men and their wives would have chosen more time at home, but this was not the case.

We also asked the men what they felt about their lack of opportunity to participate in community activities while at work. Very few men (5) said that they disliked not being able to take part in community activities.

Though we encouraged the Inuit interviewers to search for the people's real feelings, it is still possible that people disliked being away or felt that the settlement suffered. None of the material we received indicates this, but perhaps the desire for a high paying job and the purchases it represents overshadows any negative expressions. They may not have wanted to jeopardize their future work opportunities. These answers may also have been the result of the reluctance of Inuit to talk about personal matters or the reluctance of the Inuit interviewers to push questions.

However, it was our general conclusion that the Inuit involved did not feel that their work disturbed the settlement's life. One of the best informed long-time white residents concluded that the Gulf employment program generally appeared to have had little effect on the operating life of the community, far less than had been anticipated.

Impact On the Family

The most obvious impact of the employment program on family life was that it required the men to be away from home and family two thirds of the time.

We anticipated that, despite the strong familism emphasis in Inuit culture, this would not be seen as a major hardship because it was comparable with absences required in trapping. Our data showed this generally to be the case. The married workers were asked about how they felt about being separated from their wives and children. None reported that they disliked it very much, and only four men (11%) said they disliked it a little, while 45 per cent said they liked the separation. They responded similarly when asked about separation from their children.

These men were also asked to indicate how much they worried about a number of home problems while away. Approximately one-half of the men said that they did not worry at all, and one-half said that they did worry about something happening to their wives, their children or relatives or that their children or wives would get into trouble. However, few reported that they worried very much.

Another indication of their minimal concern is seen in responses given when they were asked if they would like to work in the Delta again during the coming winter. Some 80 per cent indicated a definite yes, and 10 per cent said, "Yes, I think so." Only one man gave a definite "no" response. As far as the men were concerned, clearly the advantages of wage work for Gulf outweighed the disadvantages of separation and worry.

Wives. The wives were asked if they had wanted their husbands to work for Gulf when they first heard of the opportunity, and 82 per cent of the wives said they did. They were also asked what they did not like about their husband's work for Gulf. Three fourths did not mention anything, and five mentioned loneliness, or inconvenience.

The wives were further asked if they had any particular troubles while their husbands were away. None of the wives indicated they had. When asked whether or not they worried or were unhappy while their husbands were away, 60 per cent said, "No", and others mentioned loneliness, worry about their safety, and their own fearfulness. To the question whether or not they wished their husband to work again during the coming winter, 97 per cent replied "yes", and only one said, "no". When asked about the length of the work rotation period, about 70 per cent selected the three weeks at work and one week at home option. Over 90 per cent said they would like their husbands to work as long as possible during the 1973-74 season.

It would appear that the majority of wives apparently suffered no serious hardship -- at least not serious enough to mention to the female Inuit interviewer. It appears that the women were willing to put up with the disruptions to family life or that these disruptions were minimal. They seemed to feel that the economic benefits outweigh the problems.

Children. Thirty-five older children were also interviewed. Generally, the children also reported approval of their father's employment. About 70 per cent noted that they were happy about it -- mainly giving as their reasons the items which their father's money bought pop, candy, clothing, food and toys.

Some children (19) did report some sadness at their father's absences, and reported feelings of loneliness. Still, all of them said they wanted him to work again. All but one asserted they were proud to have him working in the Delta. When the boys were asked if they would like the same job that their father did during the winter, 70 per cent said, "Yes". The others who said "No" indicated they wanted free time. When asked if they would like a

routine involving two weeks at work and one week at home, like their father's, all but one said, "yes".

These data show generally that the children saw Gulf employment positively. It was good, worth doing, because it directly raised their material standard of living. It appears that their fathers had not reflected negative feelings towards their work experience. However, several teachers and residents did report one negative effect. They felt that some of the older children, especially the boys, saw formal schooling as less important. The availability of Gulf employment made school appear less than necessary for a good job and good wages.

Again, we recognize that the Inuit may have been masking their true feelings and the questionnaire categories may not adequately reflect their ways of expression. However, the consistency of the responses, and the strength of certain "unnecessarily extreme" responses, as when 90 per cent of the wives said they would like their husbands to work "as long as possible", give us confidence in the overall validity of this picture. The fact that 96 per cent of the 1972-73 work crew returned the following season gives further substantial support.

Impact on Health

Diet. Two areas of concern about diet and health were voiced by many whites in Coppermine. One related to consumption of sweets and starches. Increasing amounts of money were available to children which apparently resulted in increased consumption of pop, candy, chips, etc. Adults also were believed to spend a great deal on these items and for foods with low nutritional

value, such as whitebread. Of course Gulf could not be held accountable for the food purchases of their employees, yet the greater availability of money had led to an increased consumption of these. Eventually, a direct relationship might develop between income level and malnutrition. However at present there is absolutely no evidence of reduced consumption of cariboo and fish. Superiors in the Mackenzie Delta also noted that the Inuit workers ate a lot of meat when at camp. They also noted the Inuit workers consumed many sweets.

The second health issue concerned the apparent increase in liquor purchases. Our Territorial liquor data do show that more liquor was purchased during the Gulf employment year than during the previous year. We cannot prove that this was entirely due to Inuit consumption. Whites comprise about 12 per cent of the Coppermine residents and we could not distinguish between white and Inuit importers of liquor from Yellowknife. The assumption that white imports remained constant during the 1971-72 and 1972-73 periods seems justified. Data obtained from the Territorial Liquor Control Board show that the value of liquor imported into Coppermine between Nov. 1, 1972 and June 1, 1973, increased 29 per cent over the preceding year. The resident whites were quite sure that drinking had increased, or at least that its negative side effects were more visible. There were no indications, however, that money needed for food or clothing was spent on liquor.

Respiratory Infections. One possibility that we sought to test was that increased liquor consumption, and thereby increased drunkenness, might lead to increased child neglect in the community. We sought to assess this possibility by using the incidence of respiratory infections as an index of

child neglect. Accordingly, data on respiratory infections among babies under one year of age and between one and six years of age were recorded from Nursing Station records. The results are found in Table IV. These data show that a month by month comparison for the November 1971 - May 1972 period, with the comparable 1972-73 period reveal no noteworthy differences between the two, excepting only the high incidence for April 1973.

Table IV
Respiratory Infections Among Infants
And Small Children
Coppermine
Nov. 1971 - Aug. 1973

Month	1971-1972				1972-1973			
	Infants		Small Children		Infants		Small Children	
	N	Incidence	N	Incidence	N	Incidence	N	Incidence
Nov.	15	.68	13	.12	4	.24	15	.11
Dec.	7	.37	23	.20	7	.37	15	.12
Jan.	4	.19	14	.12	12	.67	23	.18
Feb.	2	.11	12	.10	7	.44	7	.05
Mar.	6	.32	8	.08	2	.13	22	.17
Apr.	9	.47	24	.23	17	1.13*	67	.51
May	15	.79	22	.21	8	.67	24	.18
June	22	1.10	25	.18	5	.45	28	.21
July	16	.80	30	.22	9	.69	31	.23
August	15	.79	55	.41	10	.77	23	.17
Sept.	18	1.06	46	.35				
Oct.	15	.88	24	.18				

During this month a respiratory infection epidemic swept through the children in Coppermine. The nurse felt certain it was quite unrelated to adult drinking behavior. Our data show, however, that this month saw the heaviest liquor import into the settlement of the entire 24 month period for which we have data, \$2,757 as compared with \$2,071 the preceding year.

Violence. Almost all violence in northern communities is associated with heavy drinking. We sought to determine whether the possible increased liquor consumption, and perhaps suspicion of the fidelity of wives while men were away at work, might result in increased violence, directed at wives or at suspected lovers. Data on fights were of course not available from informants, nor from R.C.M.P. data. However data on violent woundings resulting from drunken fights needing suturing or X-raying, were obtained from the nursing station. We took as our observation period the Nov. 1 - July 31 interval because of the Inuit tendency to brood about suspicions and grudges rather than to respond immediately (Briggs, 1968).

The data show that between November, 1971, and July 31, 1972, there were eleven cases of violently inflicted wounds while for the 1972-73 period the number was 18, a noteworthy increase. However, if one compares victims in terms of sex and marital status, a more dramatic pattern appears. There is no increase in the incidence of male victims, nor of single women, but among married women it doubles, from four to eight, during the observation period. Thus it might be argued that the work separations, when accompanied by increased income permitting increased liquor purchases, are detrimental to family life, and associated with increased violence within the family. This index is only

suggestive but is an important one for future examination. It should also be noted that few of the results of violence are ever officially reported either to the police or the nursing station. There was a definite feeling among white respondents that violence had increased in the period under consideration.

Table IV

Nursing Station Records of Violence Inflicted Wounds

Coppermine

Nov. 1, 1972 - August 31, 1973

1971 - 1972		1972 - 1973	
	TOTAL		TOTAL
v. 1 ¹ F ¹ S ² 16 ³	1	Nov. 1 ¹ FM61; 1 ¹ MM44; 1 ¹ FS18;	3
e. 1 ¹ FM30; 1 ¹ MS22; 1 ¹ MM29; 1 ¹ FM23;	4	Dec.	0
n. 1 ¹ FM60;	1	Jan.	0
b. 1 ¹ FS18;	1	Feb.	0
r.	0	Mar. 1 ¹ MM41;	1
r. 1 ¹ MM31; 1 ¹ MS21; 1 ¹ FM52;	3	Apr. 1 ¹ MS22; 1 ¹ FM27; 1 ¹ MM37;	3
y	0	May 1 ¹ FM33; 1 ¹ MW78;	2
ne 1 ¹ MM22;	1	June 1 ¹ FM33; 1 ¹ FS18; 1 ¹ FS17; 1 ¹ MS21; 1 ¹ FM25;	5
ly	0	July 1 ¹ FW68; 1 ¹ FM40; 1 ¹ FM66; 1 ¹ FM27;	4
TOTAL: Nov.1971 - July 31, 1972 - 11		TOTAL: Nov. 1972 - Aug. 1973	18

MARY: 1971-72 1972-73

	FS1	3
	FM4	8
	FW	1
Total	F5	12
	MS3	2
	MM3	3
	MW	1
Total	M6	6

¹F = female; M = male

²S = single; M = married; W = widowed

³Age in years

Consequences for the Settlement

Let us summarize some of the consequences discussed in this study.

1. The general consultative approach of Gulf was appreciated and made for very good working relationships with the settlement. It created the expectation that this would continue and the commissioning of this research further reflected that pattern.
2. The long-term white residents reported that the Gulf employment program had had few direct negative effects on community life.
3. There was almost unanimous approval of the program by the Inuit men, women and children who were interviewed.
4. The most general reasons given for the popularity of the program were the money it brought to the community and the general work conditions.
5. As far as we could determine most of the money was spent in the community on goods directly relating to family necessities and resource harvesting. Most of the money went to The Bay. The territorial liquor store and the local Inuit cooperative took in a small proportion.
6. Community social participation was not negatively affected, and in fact seems to have increased in certain areas.
7. Although some men, women and children reported loneliness because of absences, only one respondent actually rejected the idea of employment in the coming winter.

8. The effects on diet appear somewhat varied. There was no evidence of reduced consumption of cariboo and fish which are by far the most important staples in the community. Many whites deplored the effect of "junk foods", but they did note the purchase of nutritious foods such as fruits and vegetables as well.
9. There was an increase in the importation of liquor into the community. However, respiratory illness among children did not increase significantly during the employment period, thus there is no firm evidence that the increased consumption of alcohol results in increased child neglect.
10. Our data show an increase in violent woundings particularly among married women. We interpret this as suggesting that separation may exacerbate tensions between husbands and wives, and that when reunion is associated with plentiful alcohol, violence is not infrequent. Thus family solidarity does appear to suffer, somewhat.
11. The children appeared to be happy with the new employment of their fathers, primarily because of the material advantages that it brought. Many said that they would like similar work, and they were attracted by the high wages.
12. Some teachers reported that there was a decline of interest in formal schooling because high wages could be earned without it. Key community positions previously had gone to those men who had more education. The future effect of this concern should be carefully assessed.

Our research revealed that the overall effect of the Gulf employment program was positively perceived and assessed by the Inuit and white residents. Many men had the opportunity to be employed for good wages. The flow of cash into the community was conservatively estimated to have increased about 75 per cent. These funds enabled the purchasing of a variety of goods -- useful equipment, more store food and clothing, more luxuries, more liquor. It also included the payment of higher rents and more taxes. Young men, who had little to occupy their time and little to look forward to in terms of future employment, had a new world of wage work opened to them. Older men, without many opportunities for wage work in the community, had good paying jobs now. Children and adolescents saw a very lucrative future open to them, which had not been available before. On a short term basis, this work program has had many positive features. Only time and further research will reveal the long-term implications of this employment for Coppermine.

FOOTNOTES

1

A more extensive discussion of the program can be found in our final report to Gulf Oil. (Hobart and Kupfer, 1973).

2

In addition to the Hudson's Bay store there is a Co-op store in Coppermine, which primarily sold handicrafts to whites, but did import a few shipments of fresh produce and sold a few Skidoos, boats, and outboard motors, as well as spare parts.

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Date Due

MAY 14 '81			
MAY 21 '81			
APR 27 '82			
MAY 8 '82			
APR 25 '85			
DEC 8 '87			
DEC 8 '87			
MAR 25 '89			
APR 11 '88			
DEC 12 '88			
Returned Law DEC 08 '97			

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HOBART, Charles W. and
KUPFNER, George.

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